

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462**  
**MINUTES, MARCH 19, 2009**

President Johnson convened the business meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:00 p.m. in the Colonial Instructional Television (CITV) studios in Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) on March 19, 2009.

**Board Members Present:** Lenore Bruno, Tom Davis, Gary Johnson, Kelly Jowett, Susan Moore, Hope Luken, Dr. William Ryan and Mitch Zimmer.

**Board Members Absent:** Steven Slutsky.

**Also Attending:** Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; Richard Hartz, Director of Human Resources; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Kim Newell, Assistant Director of CITV; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; Jessica Piergiovanni and Sarah Corcoran, Board Student Representatives; Denise Marks; Manuela Sabato; Eleni Ntelekos; Maria Conway; Collen DiFabio; Michelle Young; Nate Orfe; Cynthia Cox; Ryan Cox; Matt Bretzius; Robert Hart, students receiving awards, their families and friends.

Mr. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on February 25, March 11 and March 16 to discuss legal and personnel issues.

Mr. Johnson asked Dr. Cotter to present the students who are to be honored. Dr. Cotter first introduced wrestling coach Nate Wachter, who presented state qualifier John Michael Staudenmayer. Dr. Cotter then called Kendra Hoffman to the podium. She presented indoor track state qualifier Katie Gorman. Finally, Dr. Cotter asked Joe Butler to come forward. He presented indoor track state and national qualifier Anthony Lancaster.

**Minutes:** Mr. Johnson asked Board members to consider the minutes of the Board Work Session of February 17; the General Meeting of February 19; the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of March 5; the Human Resources Committee of March 6; the Special Meeting of the Board and the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of March 11 and the Curriculum Committee of March 16. See enclosures #1 through #6 and #45.

Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Johnson sought Board action on the financial reports on the list for approval. They included the Budget Transfers, the Bond Fund Report, the Capital Projects Report, the General Fund/Federal Program Bills, the Capital Reserve Fund, the Food Service Bills/Cafeteria Report, the Outstanding Investment Report, the Cash Flow Summary, the Comparison of Taxes Collected, the Real Estate Tax Escrow Report, the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending February 28 as shown in enclosures #7 through #18.

Dr. Ryan stated that the references to PBSA in the second paragraph of the second page of the Curriculum minutes should read PSBA.

Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the financial reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** None.

**Staff Report:** Conshohocken Elementary School Principal Denise Marks and teachers Manuela Sabato, Eleni Ntelekos and Maria Conway reported on English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and the programs they have implemented to support them. Topics included translated materials, Family Literacy Nights, the Beginning English Skills Today (BEST) program and a parent workshop.

**Budget Presentations:** At Mr. Johnson's request, Mrs. Moore presented the proposed 2009-2010 Facilities Management and Transportation Budget. She stated that the proposed facilities budget is down five percent from the current year, despite increases for chemical disposal, boiler and flood insurance and custodial equipment. Mrs. Moore noted that heating costs are down 32.59 percent. Mr. Yemm attributed the savings to increased fuel efficiency and the lower cost of fuel. Mrs. Moore stated that the proposed transportation budget is .14 percent higher than the current year. She stated that technology support for the scheduling software has increased, while special education transportation has increased over 40 percent and equipment costs are up 160 percent.

Mr. Johnson asked Mrs. Luken to present the proposed 2009-2010 Personnel Budget. Mrs. Luken stated that the enrollment is projected to increase by 26 students. She reported that elementary enrollment is expected to rise by 50 students while the secondary enrollment will decrease slightly. She stated that the proposed budget includes 13.3 new positions in order to keep elementary class sizes low, increase special education support district wide, provide more reading and math support at the high school and add administrative support. Mrs. Luken said the cost of the 13.3 new positions is \$750,000.00.

**Old Business:** None.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Johnson directed the Board to act on a request by Bernadette Biasi, President of the Plymouth Whitmarsh High School Scholarship Fund, for \$2.00 to be added to the price of student picture packages with the money going to the scholarship fund. See enclosure #19. He noted that since 1986, the scholarship fund has awarded students almost \$422,000.00.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson also asked the Board to consider the acceptance of a gift of \$2,500.00 from Mr. Michael Schwab to the PWHS Language Arts Department, including the Speech and Debate Team. See enclosure #20.

Mrs. Jowett moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to accept the gift. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked Dr. Cotter to send a thank you letter to Mr. Schwab.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter stated that his report consisted of the Personnel Report and Substitute List and the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List. See enclosures #21 and #22. He added that yellow pages included several changes including the retirement of Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services. He said that District was sad to see Mrs. DeLong step down. Mrs. DeLong said she had mixed feelings about retiring but is looking forward to spending more time with her three grandchildren.

Dr. Cotter added that other changes to the Personnel Report and Substitute List from Monday evening include three additional leaves, three replacements and a rate increase. He added that the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List includes one additional appointment.

Mr. Johnson thanked Mrs. DeLong for her service to the District.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Board Student Representatives Report:** Miss Piergiovanni reported on the Medical Careers Club job fair, the Post Prom Fashion Show and the spring musical. Miss Corcoran reported that parent/teacher conference were taking place, the senior class dinner is tomorrow night and among the accomplishment of the winter sports teams, the boys basketball team advanced to the state semifinals.

**New Business:** Mrs. Moore stated that the Board is asked to approve several contracts and leases with the Montgomery Early Learning Center. She noted that none of the contracts contain an increase in rental fees. They include agreements for the Before and After School Program, the 2009 Summer Program and office space at CE. See enclosures #24 through #26.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the contracts. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mrs. Moore also stated that Board approval is requested regarding a contract with Montgomery County Head Start on the lease of space in one of the District's four elementary school buildings. See enclosure #27. She noted that there would be no rental increase for the 2009-2010 school year. Mr. Yemm confirmed for Mrs. Moore that the space would be located in CE.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board action on a revised technology agreement with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) to include Power School services. See enclosure #28. Mr. Boegy confirmed for Mr. Johnson that the District would realize significant cost savings with the new agreement.

Mrs. Bruno moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the revised agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider Board Policy #201.2 on a first-read basis. See enclosure #29. He stated that the state has mandated each school district to develop a policy on student admissions. Dr. Cotter added that the District is working with Fox Rothschild to revise the policy to tailor it to meets the District needs. He noted that Board Policy #202 already addresses some residency issues. Dr. Ryan noted that a recent issue of PSBA magazine dedicated considerable space to this issue including varying viewpoints on several of the residency issues included.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the policy on a first-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider a proposal from Eileen Spector, Special Education Supervisor, regarding an extended school year for special education students. See enclosure #30. Dr. Cotter confirmed for Mr. Johnson that the program was not new. He added that there was a K-5 program, a middle school program and a life skills program. Mrs. DeLong added that a new program component addresses autistic support. She noted that the programs are funded through the Individuals with Disabilities Act so that there is no cost to the District.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the program. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Davis stated that Board action is needed on a professional conference request for 15 professional staff members from PWHS and the Colonial Middle School to attend an Advancement Via Individual Determination training institute in Orlando, Fla., from June 28 to July 2. See enclosure #31. He noted

that grant and building funds will cover all costs for the trip, which has the support of the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.

Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the conference requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Zimmer asked the Board to consider four field trips in one motion. He stated that the first is for two PWHS students to participate in a state level speech and debate competition at Susquehanna University from March 26-28. See enclosure #33. The second trip is for the entire fourth grade at Colonial Elementary School (CES) to attend the Camden Aquarium over the course of six days. See enclosure #34. Mr. Zimmer noted that funding for the trip is provided by the PTO and student payments. He reported that the third trip request is for a PWHS student to attend the All-State Chorus at several area high schools from April 22-25. See enclosure #35. The final request is for CES fifth grade students to attend a Trenton Thunder baseball game on May 21. He noted that the trip is aligned with the fifth grade math curriculum. See enclosure #36. Mr. Zimmer stated that funding is provided through the PTO, fundraising and student payments.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik asked the Board to approve Disciplinary Stipulation Agreement #97083. He noted that the agreement is submitted to the Board as it was reviewed in executive session.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the disciplinary stipulation agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit: Mr. Zimmer reported that the Board approved 10 policies. He added that the District must appoint a Board member to the IU Board in April.

CMTHS: No report.

Human Resources: Mrs. Luken stated that Mrs. DeLong shared information supporting a salary review for the Behavioral Health Advisor position. Mr. Hartz provided information on disability insurance for all district employees. She noted that the committee supported his request to consider using an outside provider for that coverage. Mrs. Luken added that the committee reviewed distance learning programs and the District's practice of not supporting online programs. The committee agreed to support online courses from some traditional graduate programs but would not support tuition reimbursement for entire online programs.

Finance: No report.

Curriculum and Program: Mr. Davis reported that the committee reviewed a report on the Extended School Year program and noted that the program will run from June 22 through July 23. He added that an evaluation for candidacy for re-accreditation by the Middle States Association on Secondary Schools will take place at PWHS from April 28 through May 1. The committee also reviewed a report on the technical education programming at the high school. Dr. Gorodetzer reported that Dr. Monica Sullivan discussed proposed grading scale changes at PWHS. She noted that Dr. Liz McKeane presented a summary of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association graduate competency requirements as well as an update on the PSSA.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore noted that the Board is asked to act on the disposal of obsolete computer equipment. At Mrs. Moore's request, Mr. Boegly stated that the equipment will be disposed in one of three ways, via donation, given to Whitmarsh Township or sold on ebay by the MCIU.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion approval the equipment disposal. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Community Relations and Student Life: Mr. Zimmer reported that Kindergarten registration was underway and that the District was conducting a concerted effort to register students during the month of March. He added that the middle school musical was a success and congratulated the students and staff on their hard work. Mr. Zimmer also congratulated the PWHS boys' basketball team on an outstanding season and noted that the new CITV remote truck had arrived.

Safety and Wellness: Mrs. Bruno stated that the committee will meet on April 1 at 8:15 a.m.

Legislative: Dr. Ryan stated that there is a moratorium on graduate competency assessments until July. He added that The Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will provide Pennsylvania with a total of \$2.6 billion in federal stimulus funds for investment in early childhood, K-12 and higher education.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman  
Board Secretary